

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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EA ALSO FOR AMBASSADOR NEWSOM

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PEPR, RP, TH
SUBJECT: THAI PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO THE PHILIPPINES

REF: MANILA 3086

1. THAI PRIME MINISTER KRIANGSAK CHOMANAN, ACCOMPANIED BY HIS WIFE AND A 24-PERSON ENTOURAGE INCLUDING SEVEN MINISTERS, ENDED A FOUR-DAY VISIT TO THE PHILIPPINES FEBRUARY 23 FOLLOWING TALKS WITH PRESIDENT MARCOS IN MANILA AND RESORT TOWN OF BAGUIO. INDOCHINA DOMINATED DISCUSSIONS WHICH ALSO TOUCHED ON BILATERAL AND ASEAN ECONOMIC RELATIONS. THAI PRIME MINISTER BRIEFED PRESIDENT MARCOS AND PHILIPPINE OFFICIALS ON CURRENT FIGHTING IN INDOCHINA, THOUGH HE DID NOT, ACCORDING TO PHILIPPINE AND THAI SOURCES, REQUEST ANY SPECIFIC PHILIPPINE ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF THAILAND'S DISPUTE WITH CAMBODIA. KRIANGSAK REPEATED PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY
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NEED FOR ASEAN NATIONS TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS WITH COMMUNIST INDOCHINESE STATES EITHER IN ASEAN CONTEXT OR BILATERALLY. MANILA PRESS ACCORDED CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION TO KRIANGSAK STATEMENT DURING INFORMAL PRESS CONFERENCE ABOARD PRESIDENTIAL YACHT FEBRUARY 21 THAT "OUTSIDERS" SHOULD NOT INTERFERE WITH INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF ASEAN. KRIANGSAK, ACCORDING TO DFA OFFICIAL, DID NOT

IDENTIFY OUTSIDERS TO WHOM HE WAS REFERRING AND ISSUE REPORTED-
LY DID NOT ARISE DURING TALKS.

3. KRIANGSAK AND MARCOS DID NOT DEVOTE AS MUCH TIME TO
DISCUSSION OF GENERAL ECONOMIC ISSUES SO PROMINENTLY
FEATURED IN JOINT COMMUNIQUE (REFTEL). NO PARTICULAR
BILATERAL PROBLEMS WERE IDENTIFIED BY THE TWO LEADERS, THOUGH
PAST PHILIPPINE TRADE DEFICIT WITH THAILAND WAS NOTED IN
COMMUNIQUE. BOTH COUNTRIES AGREED TO CONCLUDE A TRADE
AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION AGREEMENT AND CREATE A JOINT
TRADE AND ECONOMIC COMMITTEE, BUT A THAI EMBOFF COMMENTED
THAT ACTIVE NEGOTIATIONS WERE NOT CONTEMPLATED IN THE
IMMEDIATE FUTURE. BOTH SIDES PAID OBEISANCE TO ESTABLISHMENT
OF "A (SIC) NEW ECONOMIC ORDER" AND PLEDGED TO TAKE APPROPRIATE
MEASURES TO TRY TO ELIMATE TRADE BARRIERS INTO MARKETS
OF DEVELOPED COUNTRIES.

3. COMMENT: MOTIVATION FOR KRIANGSAK TRIP APPEARS TWOFOLD.
FIRST, IT IS TRADITIONAL FOR NEW THAI PRIME MINISTER TO
MAKE THE ROUNDS OF ASEAN CAPITALS SHORTLY AFTER
ASSUMING OFFICE. SECOND, KRIANGSAK WILL BE
VISITING PEKING IN THIRD WEEK IN MARCH AND NO DOUBT
WANTED TO BRIEF OTHER ASEAN HEADS OF STATE ON SITUATION
IN INDOCHINA, WHICH SURELY WILL BE DISCUSSED IN
GREAT LENGTH WITH CHINESE. THERE ARE NO SIGNIFICANT
BILATERAL PROBLEMS IN PHILIPPINE-THAI RELATIONS AND
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DESPITE PRESENCE OF SEVEN THAI MINISTERS, THERE WERE NO
SEPARATE MINISTERIAL-LEVEL DISCUSSIONS. THOUGH MEDIA
DEVOTED SIGNIFICANT ATTENTION TO PHILIPPINE TRADE DEFICIT
WITH THAIRLAND, ISSUE IS NOW CONFINED TO HISTORY. CAUSE OF
DEFICIT WAS PHILIPPINE IMPORT OF RICE, WHICH PHILIPPINES
NOW PRODUCES IN SUFFICIENT QUANTITIES TO EXPORT SMALL
AMOUNTS TO OTHER ASIAN NATIONS. BOTH DFA AND THAI
EMBASSY OFFICIALS AGREED THAT VISIT WAS A SUCCESS AND
FURTHER CEMENTED ALREADY STRONG RELATIONS BETWEEN THE
TWO COUNTRIES.
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